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with the author's kind regards -

SOME REMARKS

ON

A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

THE REVEREND R. W. JELF, D.D.

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH,

IN EXPLANATION OF No. 90

IN THE SERIES CALLED

The Tracts for the Times.

BY

AMBROSE LISLE PHILLIPPS, Esq.

OF GRACE DIEU MANOR.

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REMARKS,

ETC.

No one, who has read the Letter which is mentioned in the title-page of these remarks, or the Tract No. 90, of which it was intended to give an explanation, or who reflects on the fact which is now made public, that both the one and the other proceed from the pen of a clergyman, who holds the high reputation which the Rev. Mr. Newman possesses in the Church of England; no one, I say, who has so read and reflected, whether he be a Catholic or a Protestant, can doubt for a single instant the justice and propriety of some remarks being published upon both the Tract and the Letter, expressive of the feeling produced in Catholic minds by the perusal of them.

While I readily admit that there are many in our English Catholic body, who are far more capable than I am, of treating this important subject as it ought to be treated (and I am confident such will be found to come forward on this occasion), yet after the part I have recently and publicly taken in reference to the supporters of the doctrines contained in the Oxford Tracts, it appears, at least to me, no less than to many others, whom I have

consulted, that it is my duty publicly to express my sentiments upon these two remarkable documents.

It is impossible to do sufficient justice to the firmness and courage which Mr. Newman has evinced in acknowledging the authorship of Tract No. 90. I rejoice also to see that, in his subsequent Letter to the Rev. Dr. Jelf, he persists in his noble declaration in favour of so many Catholic truths, no less than in his generous attempt to soften down the differences between the Church of England and the Catholic Church, which to me at least appears a most important step towards the reunion and the peace of distracted Christendom. Above all, I hail with inexpressible joy, and the deepest gratitude towards Him who holds in his hands the hearts of men, and who for the love of mankind turns every event to the good of His Church, the glorious admissions which, both in the Tract and the Letter, are so fearlessly proclaimed in behalf of that holy Council of Trent, against which for three centuries such absurd and irrational prejudices had taken root in the minds of our separated brethren. At the same time, much as I feel for Mr. Newman's difficult and painful position, no less than for that of all who think with him, I cannot consistently with my duty as a Catholic pass over his Letter to Dr. Jelf, without entering a respectful but firm protest against very many things which it contains.

And here let me say that, in these remarks I confine myself chiefly to Mr. Newman's Letter, inasmuch as I am not aware of anything which could appear objectionable to Catholic minds in Tract No. 90, which is not perhaps even more forcibly stated in that Letter. The remarks, therefore, on the latter, apply to the former also. I shall endeavour to be as brief as possible.

In page 6, Mr. Newman contrasts the Council of Trent with the authoritative teaching of the Church of Rome. Against this distinction I most positively protest; neither the Church of Rome, nor the other Churches in communion with her, which taken in their totality form the Church Catholic, acknowledge any other authoritative standard of teaching than the Council of Trent and the other general Councils which preceded the Tridentine. But I go further; I hesitate not to declare that neither in the Roman schools, to which Mr. Newman appeals as bearing him out in the justice of his distinction, nor in those of any other Catholic university, is there in point of fact any teaching considered as authoritative, whether moral or dogmatical, in any way contrary to or beyond the Council of Trent. In asserting this, I do not mean to deny that there are theological opinions, left as open questions in the Church, in regard to which Catholic divines are at liberty to follow each his own private judgment, or that in some particular schools, in regard to some one or

other of these, there may be a general agreement of theologians, and consequently a general teaching on the part of the same; but I do most distinctly deny that any such agreement is anything beyond an agreement in *opinion*, or that it could raise any such opinion to the rank of an article of faith, or justify any man in pronouncing it to constitute the authoritative teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. Any doctrines of such a nature, never having been proposed by the whole Church as articles of faith, are received by all Catholics as mere opinions, no matter how great the number or how holy and learned the character of the divines who support them.

I protest against the term *Church of Rome*, as used by Mr. Newman. It is contrary to facts, and to sound theology, to call the Churches (which Mr. Newman includes under that term) the *Church of Rome*. The Church of Rome is indeed their head, or (to use the words of a grave and authentic document, the Creed, as it is called, of Pope Pius IV), "the Mother and Mistress of all Churches," but it would be as absurd to call the Church of France the Church of Rome, as it would be to say that a man's head was the same as his arms or his legs.

Page 7 is truly afflicting: I hope Mr. Newman will pardon me for saying so: Exeter Hall itself could not have produced anything more so. My eldest little boy, though only six years old, could

answer it. The beggar boys at Naples could answer it, as many of them did to me twelve years ago, when out of curiosity I questioned them on these points. In short, every Catholic in the Universe, who has learnt his catechism (and it would be unfair to question others) could answer it. "The Roman," (i. e. the Catholic) "system preaches the Blessed Virgin Mary, the saints, and purgatory, instead of the Holy Trinity, heaven, and hell"!!! Look at page 7, and see whether I exaggerate Mr. Newman's words; but if they be there, as my eyes testify that they are, tell me when a more unjust carricature was drawn even by the fanatics at Exeter Hall?

Pages 8 and 9 are less objectionable; still why does Mr. Newman speak of the Tridentine Catechism, commonly called the Catechismus Romanus, as an authoritative work, on a par with the Council itself? where is his authority for such an asser-If that Catechism declare its belief in a purgatorial fire, it does so not by way of obliging men to adopt that as an article of faith, but because it follows the generally received opinion of theologians from the days of St. Augustine downwards. But let any one consult the passage of the Catechism to which Mr. Newman refers (Catechismi Concilii Tridentini, Pars i. page 55), and he will find, that though the article in question commences with these words - "Prætereà est purgatorius ignis," it yet, a few lines afterwards, explains the expression by the following words:-" ac de hujus quidem doctrinæ veritate, quam et scripturarum testimoniis, et apostolicâ traditione confirmatam esse Sancta Concilia declarant:" from which it is perfectly evident that the Tridentine Catechism aims at asserting nothing beyond what had been defined by the holy Councils, and consequently that the term purgatorius ignis was used by the Catechism as expressive of nothing beyond what the Tridentine Council had declared, in reference to which Mr. Newman has already shewn with great ability, that the belief of a purgatorial fire is in nowise decreed. And here let me observe, that the venerable Cardinal Bellarmine, who may justly be styled the prince of controvertists, writes with admirable reserve concerning this matter:-" It is no article of faith," says he, (Bellarm. lib. ii. de Purgat. cap. 11), "that there is a true and real fire in purgatory, because this has not been defined by any of our councils; and though in the Council of Florence the Greeks openly declared that they did not believe in a purgatorial fire, yet, in the decree passed in the last session, it was merely defined that there is a purgatory, but not one word said as to there being a fire there." This sentence of the great Bellarmine appears to me of immense importance, the more so as it is notorious that he himself did actually hold the opinion that there was a real fire in purgatory. From which it is evident how cautious is the language of Catholic divines, when they

are speaking of theological opinions, and how far they are from expressing themselves in reference to these in any manner that could justify others in terming it the *authoritative teaching* of the Church.

Page 10. I do not understand Mr. Newman's meaning, when he says;—" while these decrees remain unexplained in any truer and more Catholic way."—At the same time it is consolatory to find, after three centuries of cavilling and resisting against the decrees of the holy Council of Trent, that now in the full blaze of the boasted light of the nineteenth century, a clergyman, decidedly the most learned in the whole Church of England, is compelled by the omnipotent force of truth to do justice, tardily though it be, to those holy decrees; yet cannot I understand why this beautiful testimony is to be marred by a cavil about their explanation. Oh! in the name of charity, unity, and peace, do I entreat that learned clergyman, and all who think with him, with patience and candour to examine our authentic books. must be the infallible result of such an examination? I am sure it will be to admit, that from the days of the Council of Trent to our own, these decrees have never been explained in any other way than what in fact amounts to what Mr. Newman himself claims in page 18, the liberty to hold the very same doctrines in the Church of England.

Page 11. Mr. Newman quotes a passage from

the late Bishop Lloyd, in which his lordship states his preference for English Roman Catholics above the Catholics of the Continent. This testimony of Bishop Lloyd's is certainly a very flattering one to us, but one the justice of which true humility, no less than true Catholic feeling, ought to lead us to deny. I for one hesitate not to declare that I think we have much to learn from our Continental brethren; and when we shall have learnt it, such men as Bishop Lloyd will perhaps love us less exclusively, but they will love our religion more. It is amusing (if it be not irreverent to use such a word in treating of such awful and important subjects) to hear Bishop Lloyd commending us for the disuse of processions and the rest of our grand ceremonial, which, by-the-bye, has arisen solely from the persecuting enactments of a Protestant legislature; but I should have thought, that, at such an hour as this, learned prelates of the Anglican Church had had experience enough of the deficient machinery of their own system, not to rake up the silly and worn out objections against ceremonial. Surely it is not to so little purpose, that during the last thirty years Englishmen have been travelling in every direction over the globe, or that the study of history has been brought to so admirable a degree of perfection, that they have not yet learnt that no system of religion, true or false, can long maintain its sway over the minds and hearts of men without the aid

of ceremonial. The Right Honourable and eloquent author of that admirable article in a recent Number of the Edinburgh Review, on Ranke's History of the Popes, might with justice have added, in his survey of the causes of weakness in the Anglican system, the absence of processions and grand ceremonial, to that still greater source of weakness occasioned by the want of religious orders. But the fact is, the movement is going on rapidly, and what Bishop Lloyd wrote on this subject he wrote in the year 1825. To judge from the fact of his having so far outstripped his contemporaries even then, I suspect he would, had he lived longer, have kept pace with them since, to say the least; nor do I think he would have quoted in the year 1841 his sentiments of 1825.

Page 15. The infallibility of the Roman Church separate from the rest of the Church Catholic, was never advanced as an article of faith. It was the opinion of Bellarmine, and of many other divines; but never having been asserted by the whole Church as an article of faith, it is not fair to object to it as an obstacle for Catholic communion. The infallibility of the whole Church in her teaching capacity, whether in regard to questions of faith or definitions of morality, is an article of faith received by all Catholics. He who stands up for Church authority, without admitting the infallibility of that authority, is either a bad logician, or a bad moralist. By infallibility, it is not

meant that the Church has any arbitrary power of decreeing articles of faith; she can never decree anything to be an article of faith, which was not universally held to be so by the Church in all ages, from the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles. All that is meant, therefore, by infallibility is, that the Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, whom our Lord promised should ever abide with her, can never decree anything new to be believed as an article of faith, that is anything contrary to the revelation made to us by God in the Old Testament, and by his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, under the New Testament, who promised to be with his visible Church, in her office of "teaching all nations," even until the end of the world. But observe, this infallibility is promised by Jesus Christ only to the Church teaching all nations that is, to the Universal Church. The moment, therefore, that any portion of that Church isolates herself from the rest of the Church Catholic, that instant she forfeits the glorious promise which was made only to the totality, and which cannot be inherited by the several parts of which that totality is composed, unless they remain in the original position in which God's providence had placed them in reference to that universal body—that is, living members of Christ's holy vine. It is, however, a delightful thought to reflect, that what the malice of man has separated, the mercy and grace of God can reunite. Nothing can be more consoling to those who hold it, than the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church. It is true that the unlearned must receive it on trust, though not without proofs which carry conviction evidently along with them. But the learned can easily demonstrate the infallibility of the Church, not only as a theoretical proposition, but as a grand and glorious fact, in the circumstance, which their investigations cannot fail to lay open to them, that the Church has never changed her doctrines, from the days of the Apostles to our own.

Page 16. In reference to what is stated by Mr. Newman concerning our doctrine of Pardons, whether in this part of his Letter to Dr. Jelf, or in pages 28, 29, 30, 31, of Tract No. 90, I would refer the reader who desires to know the real doctrine of the Catholic Church on this head, to an admirable work published many years ago by the learned Veron, entitled "The Rule of Catholic Faith, or the Principles and Doctrines of the Catholic Church discriminated from the opinions of the Schools, and from popular errors and misstatements." This able treatise has been exceedingly well translated by the Rev. Mr. Waterworth, who published it in the year 1833. To quote at length the masterly exposition which Veron gives of the Catholic doctrine of pardons, would carry me far beyond the limits to which I deem it right to confine these remarks; I refer the reader to

the book itself, every page of which will amply repay him for the trouble of reading. I cannot, however, forbear from citing an admirable passage of the great Bellarmine, which seems to me to set at rest all the cavils and objections of writers like Bishop Jeremy Taylor, quoted in Tract No. 90, no less than those of all others who would make the absurdities of individual Catholics pass for the general doctrine and practice of the Church: "Some writers," says he, "amongst whom are Gerson and Soto, deny altogether that certain indulgences, which promise remission of punishment for thousands of years, have ever been granted by any Pope; and they assert, that all such indulgences are mere forgeries of the mendicants. It has been the custom of the Popes to confine their grants of indulgences to the same number of years as the Church did her penitential canons; which were sometimes for two, three, five, ten, or twenty years, or at most for a person's life-time, which seldom reaches beyond a hundred years. A person that really wishes to know the true history of Papal indulgences, must not seek it in the writings of our professed enemies, nor in obscure and miserable pamphlets. Let him not refer to such sources, but rather to the decrees of our Popes; to the authorized documents of our Church; or, at all events, to writers who have a just claim to veracity, authority, learning, and probity. We never find any mention, in writers whose

authority is of any weight, of indulgences, either of several thousand days, or of thousands of years." Can any declaration be more explicit or more satisfactory than this of Cardinal Bellarmine? (Bellarm. lib. c. cap. 9.) The learned Veron, after quoting it, sums up his remarks on the whole subject with these plain words: "Let us propose nothing to the belief of our dissenting brethren, but what is contained in our Profession of Faith, and the Council of Trent: let us not pretend to be wiser than the fathers of the Council, or the author of the Profession, Pope Pius IV. Let us pass over all other questions; since the profession of what is propounded by these two authorities, is undoubtedly enough to make any man a true Catholic on this point. (Veron, Rule of Faith, p. 65.) In short, so far from the strange opinions, to which Mr. Newman refers, embodying the authoritative teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on this head, it is perfectly clear that they are even repugnant to it, if not plainly and absolutely condemned by it.

With regard to what Mr. Newman states in the same page, 16, concerning St. Bonaventure's Psalter in honour of our Lady, I possess a copy of that very curious production, which I purchased at Rome some years ago. It is published with the usual approbation prefixed to all devotional books printed in Catholic countries which are not absolutely prohibited, "Superiorum permissu;" but as

for any Papal approbation of it, Mr. Newman may be correct, when he states that the Pope sanctioned it, but I can find no authority for such a statement; assuredly in the copy which I possess there is no Papal approbation prefixed. But even if it were so, the private opinion of an individual Pope constitutes no article of faith amongst Catholics. On the other hand, it is quite clear that there is nothing idolatrous in St. Bonaventure's Psalter; it certainly is not a book which I would circulate amongst Protestants, for fear of mistakes: at the same time I can perfectly conceive many Catholics, especially in Catholic countries, using such a book with great spiritual profit, because understood, as they would understand it from their previous knowledge of Catholic doctrine, it would tend to nourish in their souls a lively sense of the efficacy of the Blessed Virgin's intercession with her Divine Son. It is quite clear from many expressions which we find in the writings of St. Athanasius, of St. Ephrem, and of St. Augustine, that in the primitive ages of the Church, it was not unusual to address the Blessed Virgin Mary, when invoking her intercession, in terms quite as strong as any to be found in St. Bonaventure's Psalter. I will just quote one from the great St. Augustine, of Hippo (Sermon xviii. de Sanctis in medio.) Addressing our Blessed Lady, he says "Sit per Te excusabile, quod per Te ingerimus: fiat impetrabile, quod fidâ mente poscimus. Accipe quod offerimus, redona quod rogamus,

excusa quod timemus: quia Tu es spes unica PECCATORUM: per Te speramus veniam delictorum, et in Te beatissima nostrorum est expectatio prœmiorum. O Sancta Maria, succurre miseris, juva pusillanimes, refove flebiles, ora pro populo, interveni pro clero, intercede pro devoto femineo sexu: sentiant omnes tuum juvamen, quicumque celebrant tuam sanctam commemorationem." Now assuredly if St Bonaventure used idolatrous language in his Psalter, the language of St. Augustine, in this sermon, is equally idolatrous. Interpret the language of either according to a Protestant interpretation, and I admit that both would stand convicted of something like idolatry; for Protestants cannot imagine men using such strong language, without putting the object to whom it is addressed on a par with God: but let them suppose for a moment that they had been brought up from their infancy with a great confidence in the prayers of Jesus Christ's immaculate mother, would it be unnatural for them, in that case, occasionally to express that confidence in words, which in their strict sense can only be applied to God, and can only be applied to a creature, when in addressing such an one, we feel that we are in reality addressing God through the medium of that creature? We have instances of the invocation of saints and angels in Scripture, quite as strong in point of expression. I will cite one only-it is given us in our Lord's parable of Dives and Lazarus. It is written, "The rich man

also died, and was buried in hell: and lifting up his eyes, when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom: and he cried and said, FATHER ABRAHAM HAVE MERCY ON ME AND SEND Lazarus, &c." Now if the expressions of St. Bonaventure and those of St. Augustine be idolatrous, those of Dives are equally so. What then was Abraham's duty under such circumstances? Was it sufficient for him to reply to the poor damned soul that his invocation, his supplication, was useless? Ought he not also to have rebuked him for his idolatry? But does he? I maintain then that the man, who would convict St. Bonaventure and St. Augustine of idolatry, would bring in Abraham himself as guilty of the misprision of idolatry, to say nothing of Christ, our Lord, for teaching us such doctrine in one of his parables. But why this eternal disputing about expressions to be met with in Catholic authors? Are not they to be interpreted by the doctrine of the Church, not the doctrine of the Church by these expressions? And when has the church made it an article of her faith that her children were bound to use such expressions? Is it not a notorious fact that there is hardly an instance in her whole Liturgy, in which any invocation of saints goes beyond the simple comprecatory form, "ora pro nobis"? And is it not equally notorious that the Church has contented herself with pronouncing the invocation of saints to be "bonum et salutare," and that she has never

enjoined it as necessary to salvation? If this be so,—and who can deny it?—it is surely most unjust to appeal to such a book as St. Bonaventure's Psalter, as expressing the authoritative teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Page 18. If Mr. Newman would come forward to advocate a reunion between the Church of England and the Catholic Church, I should think him quite consistent in claiming a right to hold "a comprecation with the saints" with Bramhall—the Sacrifice of the Mass with Andrews—or that Transubstantiation was an innocent doctrine with Hooker—or with Hammond, that no general council ever did or shall err—or with Thorndike, the satisfactory nature of penitential works: but to advocate isolation, and yet to advocate the right of holding the very doctrines, on the ground of the supposed erroneousness of which the right of isolation was first asserted, appears to me a plain inconsistency.

Page 19 speaks of "articles which admit both Arminians and Calvinists," and a few lines lower down of "broad Roman errors." Page 19 seems to me to make out a poor case for the Church of Christ, what with the broad errors of Rome and the trimming of the English Church. Protestants never seem to reflect what they are about, when they make out the visible Church to be a less faithful voucher for the doctrines of Christ, than the Mahometan sect is on all hands allowed to be for the doctrines of Mahomet.

Page 26. How can a man of Mr. Newman's learning, and with his Catholic feelings, seriously assert "that the main idea really encouraged by Rome concerning Purgatory is, that it is a *substitute* for hell in the case of the unholy"? I give the sense of his words.

Pages 27 to 30 contain most interesting matter. Mr. Newman certainly does justice to the Catholic movement which characterizes our age; but I am surprised, that in quoting Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Alexander Knox, and even the fanatical Mr. Irving, as so many witnesses of it, that he should have overlooked the name of that learned and noble writer, who was formerly a Member of the Anglican Church, and whose admirable works, the Broad Stone of Honour and the Mores Catholici, will certainly form one of the brightest ornaments of our national literature in the nineteenth century, as long as the English language shall endure; or that he should not have noticed some recent works of Protestant Authors, such as Mr. Hallam's admirable History of European Literature, or an eloquent article on Ranke's History of the Popes, attributed to the Right Hon. T. B. Macaulay. The two latter unquestionably indicate the approximation of great minds to Catholic truth; whilst the Mores Catholici and the Broad Stone of Honour may be triumphantly cited as a splendid proof of what genius, united to vast learning, may produce, when tempered and directed by the sanctifying and ennobling influence of the

Catholic religion. But it is not alone in literature that this movement manifests itself; we may appeal to the progress of art as another proof. Surely the name no less than the productions of that magnificent artist, Mr. Pugin, can recall to the mind no other associations than such as are connected with the sublimest inspirations of Catholicism. Who that has seen the churches which he has erected at Derby and Macclesfield, or that truly beautiful cathedral which he is now raising to the honour of God at Birmingham, can fail to breathe that air of Catholic sanctity and devotion which dwells within them?

But it is not alone in the learned class that this movement prevails: look to the lower orders look to the multitudes of converts to the Catholic religion, who, amongst the poor all over England, in all our large towns, and even in many of our country villages, betake themselves to the Catholic system, as the only one that can afford them solid peace and comfort, worn out, as they are, with the doubts and divisions of Protestantism. to the ardent language in which some of these poor converts will describe the consolations they experience, amid the ineffable solemnities of the Catholic worship; and say whether the people of England will much longer endure the dull, cold formalities, the monotonous uniformity, or the dreary absence of all that beautifies and enlivens, which stamp the Protestant system with barren-

ness and failure. Truly, under such circumstances, it is not surprising that men of keen observation. like Mr. Newman, should come forwards to reinvest, if possible, his own distracted and desolate Church with the mantle of Catholicism. I, for one, applaud his endeavour; but let him beware lest in his attempt, noble though it be, he fail, from not carrying out his principles to their legitimate conclusion. The English Church can never be Catholic, while she remains in her present position, isolated, separated from the rest of Christendom,—not even holding communion with any other Protestant Church,—torn and divided too within herself by conflicting factions. The English Church can never command the respect and veneration of the people, so long as she justifies separation in her language to Catholics-condemning it, when she addresses the Dissenters. It is in vain for the English Church to affect to speak the language of the Fathers, while she continues to repeat the jargon of Calvin and Bucer, and while her temples have all the air of Genevan preaching-houses, and not a single characteristic of Catholic antiquity. Let her remember that the eyes of Catholic Europe are fixed upon her, watching whether yet again she will join their vast family. It is in her power to do so: the Catholic Church, like a benignant mother, waits with outstretched arms ready to embrace her. Let her not disappoint the universal hope of Christendom; myriads of faithful souls all over the earth are now praying with one accord for this blessed consummation: let not the grace be offered in vain.

Now is the moment for men of learning and piety in her communion to come forward boldly to advocate what Grotius, what Leibnitz, what Archbishop Wake, what a learned clergyman in Queen Anne's reign, with such vast erudition, and so forcibly advocated in an admirable treatise now lying before me, entitled "An Essay towards a Proposal for Catholic Communion," an essay which, in my opinion, it would be of infinite service to the cause of unity and peace to reprint. Let Mr. Newman advocate this, let others do this; there is every thing to encourage them. That there are difficulties and obstacles I do not deny: but this I fearlessly assert, that from the hour of the illfated Reformation up to the present, there never was a moment more favourable for such attempt. This I will confidently predict, that if any other course be adopted, neither Mr. Newman nor any other man living will be able much longer to satisfy the cravings of really Catholic hearts with the miserable crumbs of Catholicism, which the present rulers of the Anglican Church, in her actual Protestant position, will suffer to be doled out to appease their hunger. Such men will not stop much longer to enquire how far it is possible to reconcile the contradictory and ambiguous

statements of the Thirty-nine Articles with Catholic verity, but whether they are to be held back by such a formulary from the profession and the enjoyment of that divine truth, for which the Catholic Church of God has testified with the blood of innumerable martyrs in every age.

GRACE DIEU MANOR.

Feast of the Annunciation of our Lady, 1841.







